

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 and 15-20 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claim 21 has been added.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 1-8 and 15-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Walker, et al. (US 6,754,636) patent. Applicants have cancelled applicants' claims 1-8 and 15-20, thereby obviating the Examiner's rejections with respect to these claims.

Moreover, applicants' newly added independent claim 21 patentably distinguishes over the cited art of record. Applicants' claim 21 recites a network system in which a user apparatus, a company apparatus and a recycling center are interconnected through a network, and the user apparatus comprises a request designating means for designating a request for picking-up including a method of paying a charge for the picking-up of a secondhand item, address designating means for designating an address of a requester, and communication means for notifying the request content, designated by the request designating means, including the method of paying the charge for the picking-up of the secondhand item and the address designated by the address designating means to the company apparatus through the network, the company apparatus comprises input means for inputting the request content including the method of paying the charge for the picking-up of the secondhand item and the address of the requester from the user apparatus through the network, output means for outputting information regarding a pick-up date of the secondhand item to the user apparatus through the network to inform the requester of the pick-up date of the secondhand item, completion information acquiring means for acquiring information regarding completion of the picking-up of the secondhand item from the recycling center apparatus through the network, and payment processing means for executing a payment process based on the method of paying the charge

for the picking-up of the secondhand item input by the input means, in response to the notification of the completion information acquired from the completion information acquiring means, and the recycling center apparatus comprises notifying means for informing the company apparatus of the information regarding the completion of the pick-up of the secondhand item after the completion of the picking-up of the secondhand item.

Such a construction is not taught or suggested by the cited art of record. In particular, the Walker, et al. patent discloses a purchasing system which allows a buyer to submit a price offer for a new or used product to the purchasing system through a communication network, and arranges for the buyer to purchase the product from a seller. Col. 5, lines 18-65. In the Walker, et al. patent, when the buyer's offer is accepted by the seller, the buyer pays the purchasing system the offer price in exchange for the right to take possession of the product from the seller. The purchasing system also provides a payment to the seller in exchange for allowing the buyer to take possession of the product. Col. 6, lines 5-36.

The Walker, et al. patent, thus, teaches purchasing of a new or a used item by a buyer from a manufacturer or a retailer using the purchasing system, and payment by the buyer to the purchasing system for the right to receive, or take possession, of the product from the manufacturer or the retailer. There is, therefore, no teaching or suggestion in the Walker, et al. patent of a system that includes a recycling center, of picking up of a secondhand item from an address designated by a user and payment by the user for picking up of the secondhand item. There is also no teaching or suggestion in the Walker, et al. patent of outputting information to inform the user of a pick-up date of the secondhand item.

Moreover, the Walker, et al. patent fails to teach or suggest a company apparatus which includes a payment processing means for executing a payment process based on the method of

paying the charge for the picking-up of the secondhand item input by an input means in response to a notification of the completion information from a completion information acquiring means acquiring the completion information from a recycling center apparatus. Instead, the Walker, et al. patent teaches that the buyer pays the purchasing system in exchange for the right to take possession of the product at a retailer when the buyer's offer is accepted by the seller. That is, the purchasing system of the Walker, et al. patent receives payment for an item before the buyer picks up, or takes possession of, the item and not after the completion of the transaction between the buyer and the retailer. Thus, there is no teaching in the Walker, et al. patent of a payment processing means for executing a payment process based on the method of paying the charge for the picking-up of the secondhand item input by said input means, in response to the notification of the completion information from a completion information acquiring means acquiring the completion information from a recycling center apparatus.

Applicants' new independent claim 21, which recites the above features, therefore patentably distinguishes over the Walker, et al. patent.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claim 21 patentably distinguishes over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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